1940?s spread them in hitherto remote and slightly altered areas. In the 1940*s the presence of thousands of American troops accelerated them. Rural districts were the least affected, and in many places life was but little modified. Practically everywhere, however, some departure from the past was seen, and it increased as the years passed. The old China was going, seemingly never to return.

SUMMARY

The years following 1894 witnessed the most startling and revolutionary changes in China's history. Foreigners threatened the nation's independence. Although it was not subjugated to an alien political yoke nearly so fully as it had repeatedly been in earlier centuries, and by the 1930's had made decided progress toward the recovery of such portions of its independence as had been sacrificed, in almost every other phase of its life the country yielded to the Occident. It was frequently said that China was experiencing in one generation a transition as varied and momentous as that through which Europe had passed in the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution.

There was swept aside the political framework under which the nation had been living for more than two thousand years—a structure to which it owed its unity—and experiments were being made with Western types of government. Nothing which could confidently be called stable had yet emerged. Administratively the land was divided and repeated civil strife and banditry were impoverishing it.

On the other hand, in some respects the country was more

nearly a conscious unit than ever before. Nationalism, reenforced by the new educational system, the telegraph, the Customs Service, the post office, and, to a less extent, by the railway, the steamship, the automobile, and the airplane, was welding China together and was as effective in producing cultural uniformity as was the old administrative system.

These new institutions and appliances, with others, bade fair also to transform the economic life of the people.

Religiously the practices and beliefs of the masses were little altered, but the observances maintained by the state were dis-